(b) if so, the number of villages identified for CSC in the State of Andhra Pradesh;

(c) whether it is a part of National e-governance Action Plan;

(d) the amount that is required to set up 1 lakh CSC in the country; and

(e) from where the resources are pooled to meet this expenditure?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (DR. SHAKEEL AHMAD): (a) The Government has approved a Scheme for providing support for establishing 100,000 broadband, Internet enabled, Common Service Centres (CSCs) in rural areas of the country. The Scheme has been approved in September 2006. These centers would provide government and private services at the doorstep of the citizen. The CSCs would be established in a ratio of 1 CSC for every 6 census villages in a State.

(b) As per the CSC guidelines (which are accessible at www.mit.gov.in) every state is eligible to set up 1 CSC for 6 Census villages. As per this norm, Andhra Pradesh would be eligible to set up 4687 CSCs.

(c) Yes, Sir.

(d) to (e) The Scheme has been approved at a total cost of Rs. 5742 crores over 4 years, of which the Government of India is estimated to contribute Rs. 856 crores and the State Governments Rs. 793 crores. The balance resources would be mobilized from the private sector. The Scheme is to be implemented through a Public Private Partnership.

Extension of STP scheme to tier-II and tier-III cities

1660. SHRIMATI N.P. DURGA: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether any assessment has been made by his Ministry to extend the STP Scheme to tier-II and tier-III cities in the country;

(b) the details of STPs in the State of Andhra Pradesh;

(c) whether any assessment has also been made, in view of vast number of SEZs coming into the country, the relevance of STP scheme itself;

(d) whether his Ministry is striving for a level playing field between the STPs and SEZs; and

(e) if so, how his Ministry is planning to do this?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (DR. SHAKEEL AHMAD): (a) STPI (Software Technology Park of India) has already established 47 centers across the country, out of which 7 centers are in Metros and balance 40 centers are in Tier-II and Tier-III cities.

(b) STPI has already established five centers in the State of Andhra Pradesh at Hyderabad, Vishakhapatnam, Thirupati, Vijaywada and Warangal. It has been decided to set up the sixth center in the State at Kakinada.

(c) to (e) The strength of the STP Scheme lies in the fact that it is a virtual scheme, which allows software companies to set up their operations in the most convenient locations and plan their investment driven by business needs. It is a Pan-India Scheme.

The Scheme has been widely successful and exports made by STP units have grown from Rs. 52 Crores in 1992-93 to Rs. 100,965 crores in 2005-06.

The SEZ (Special Economic Zones) scheme caters to both manufacturing and service sectors covering all products and services, where as STP scheme was specifically designed to cater to the IT & ITES sectors. The SME (Small & Medium Enterprises) sector has found the STP Scheme particularly suitable and their share in exports has grown to 47% during 2005-06.

Availing of local code dialing system to Gurgaon/Bahadurgarh

1661. SHRI DHARAM PAL SABHARWAL: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Faridabad is linked with NOIDA, Ghaziabad by 95 dialing system whereas such facility is not available to the residents of Gurgaon/Bahadurgarh;